

MEDDLESOME
MATTY

By
JANE & ANNE TAYLOR





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MEDDLESOME MATTY





MEDDLESOME
MATTY
AND OTHER POEMS FOR INFANT MINDS

by
JANE & ANNE TAYLOR

With an introduction by
EDITH SITWELL

Illustrated by Wyndham Payne



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INTRODUCTION

THE authoresses of many of these poems—the Misses Ann and Jane Taylor—were born, the eldest at Islington on the 30th of January, 1782, the younger in Red Lion Street, Holborn, on the 23rd of September, 1783; they were the grandchildren of Isaac Taylor, who was a friend of Goldsmith and Richardson, and came of a stock much interested in literature. When they were tiny children they were taken by their father to live in a large house at Lavenham, Suffolk, where he indulged in the mild occupations of engraving for Boydell's Bible and making water-colour sketches of the Suffolk scenery and buildings. Eventually he left Lavenham and went to Colchester, where he became an Independent minister. Ann married the Reverend Joseph Gilbert, a Congregational minister, and went with him to live at Nottingham. She had a large family—the children, no doubt, were led into the paths of virtue by these poems—and died in 1866. Her sister Jane stayed unmarried, interested herself in missionary work, and died in 1824, when she was but forty years of age.

Adelaide O'Keefe, who was joint author with the Misses Taylor of "Original Poems for Infant Minds," was born in 1776, and was the daughter of John O'Keefe. A very curious parentage it was for her. John O'Keefe was the author of several burlesques and farces. I am afraid I know practically none of his work; but the only verse of his that I *do* know is certainly one of the liveliest, technically, in our lan-

POEMS FOR INFANT MINDS

guage. His daughter did not inherit his extraordinary technical competence, and it is a curious fact that she and Ann and Jane Taylor might, as far as their verses are concerned, be members of the same family. It is pleasant to know that she brought out a book—all her own work—called “Original Poems Calculated to Improve the Mind of Youth and Allure it to Virtue.” I wonder what her father thought of that, and if it improved and allured him !

It is interesting to imagine the kind of world into which ladies of this kind—who were born at this time—would enter . . . a world where it would always seem the earliest spring—landscapes of snow unripe as the notes of a virginal, little gold dark precious buds appearing on the delicate thin trees—a world of an almost Chinese subtlety, aloofness, and distinction. We do not find quite this distinction echoed in these poems, but we know the distinction was there, for Jane Austen reproduced it for us. In these poems we find, in spite of the high moral tone, not so much a bleak air as a purring, tea-table, site-by-the-fire, mittened kind of atmosphere, which is sometimes at variance with the severity the ladies are trying to show. How great is the difference between the fabric of our modern minds and that of these ladies of a hundred years ago ! It is impossible therefore to guess exactly how serious they were when they wrote any of these poems. We are told that they were lively, as children and as young ladies; so perhaps they were not always quite as portentous as they seem. In the National Portrait Gallery there

INTRODUCTION

is a picture of Ann and Jane Taylor in the garden at Lavenham, painted by their father in 1791, in which they appear as very serious-minded, good little girls in white muslin dresses, each with a nosegay as bright as her cheeks. But beyond the seriousness—perhaps induced by respect for papa—very little can be gathered.

When we ask ourselves—as some people may—why the public at this time should still be interested in these verses, we must remember, first of all, their prettiness, their fresh, elusive and naive charm—a charm which was, no doubt, quite unknown to the authoresses themselves—they would probably have disapproved of such a quality. And we must remember, too, that, every hundred years or so, a time comes when the problems of conduct take the place of the problems of the heart, as the protagonists of literature and the drama ! One of these pleasing periods is now with us, and that, no doubt, is one of the reasons why we find a fresh interest being taken in the verses of the Misses Ann and Jane Taylor and Miss Adelaide O’Keefe. It is interesting to compare the moral instruction contained in these verses with that, say, of “Sandford and Merton” and with that, more modern, contained in those plays which are at present delighting fashionable London and devastating such dreary high-brows as myself with their incomparable boredom. In these plays we are shown how not to behave—even if we are parvenus—the only flaw in the moral lesson being the certainty that the authors are mistaking the parvenus for somebody quite different. In

‘Sandford and Merton’ we are warned what we had better not do, but, as far as I remember, nobody is eaten by a bear or made to listen to epigrams. We are just told *not to do it*—and the matter is left at that. And if we are good, and work properly at our lessons, we are promised some cherries. But in the verses of which I write not only are we told what not to do, we are told what will happen to us if we do it.

For instance, there is the richly-deserved fate of Harry in “The Little Fisherman.” Harry (the shortening of his name is, I feel, a concession to human weakness), as a direct result of indulging in the cruel sport of fishing, is suspended by the chin from a meat-hook, and suffers, I am glad to say, considerable discomfort. Then, in “The Plum-Cake,” we are warned by the example of John, who suffers from a severe pain in consequence of having over-indulged in this delicious food. Again, if you boast and “show off” when a bank note is in your possession, what could be more natural than that a goat should walk up to you, take it away from you and eat it? This is only to be expected, under the circumstances, and that is what happened to Idle Richard. And if, when we cast off our petticoats and wear trousers for the first time, we are so anxious to show the trousers that we disobey our mama, we cannot, to my mind, be surprised if a sweep comes along and is the utter ruin of the said trousers—which is what happened, in these pages, to George.

Miss Ann’s, Miss Jane’s, and Miss Adelaide’s eyes

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are like the eyes of Providence . . . not a sparrow could fall without their taking the most intense interest. Or perhaps not so much a sparrow as a pin. Waste not, want not. Heedless Emily was unable to take her place in a party that was going to ride out to see an air-balloon, because, the day before, she had dropped a pin and had omitted to pick it up again. One cannot be too careful in small things. Everything in these verses is as neat as neat can be, excepting, occasionally, the verses. These are a little apt to bend at the waist.

In none of these verses are we introduced to the Horribly Good Child, as in "Sandford and Merton." These children are occasionally moderately good, quiet, well-behaved, and nice ; but these qualities have not, in them, developed into a kind of monstrosity. For instance, there is poor Mary, in "The Gleaner," who has to work so hard to fill her small blue apron with ears of corn, because her little brothers and sisters are hungry. Poor Mary is not a prig in the least, but a dear little human child. This is a very pretty poem, and I like, too, another poem of Jane's, "The Pond," which contains the story of the fate of a naughty chicken who was most rightly drowned for disobeying her mama. I like the nice, bustling, busy technique of this—just like chickens and ducks in a farmyard :

The ducks, I perceived, began loudly to quack
When they saw the poor fowl floating dead on its back,
And by their grave gestures and looks in discoursing
Obedience to parents were plainly enforcing.

POEMS FOR INFANT MINDS

It makes my blood run cold to think of our daily falls from righteousness, and what might, according to these poems, be the results.

Once, and once only, does one of these ladies break out in a way which seems scarcely becoming. Miss Jane, in "The Pigs," lets herself go. For papa, in answer to Willy's remark, describes the protagonists thus :

'I see they are feasting !' his father replied ;
'They eat a good deal, I allow,
But let us remember, before we deride,
'Tis the nature, my dear, of a sow.'

I confess I was surprised when I read that fourth line. No doubt all is permissible as long as moral instruction is the aim. At the same time, I should like to know what papa would have said to Willy had *he* been guilty of such a sentence !

These poems do not raise, at least in this Infant Mind, any wish to be the reverse of virtuous. But then, neither does "Sandford and Merton," a work which is, perhaps, a little dull, but really very right-minded. No, these poems do not drive us to mad excesses. They give us, merely, a comfortable domestic certainty that virtue will be triumphant. Whereas, in real life . . .

Well, perhaps we had better change the subject !

EDITH SITWELL.

MEDDLESOME MATTY





Meddlesome Matty

ONE ugly trick has often spoiled
The sweetest and the best;
Matilda, though a pleasant child,
One ugly trick possessed,
Which, like a cloud before the skies,
Hid all her better qualities.

Sometimes she'd lift the tea-pot lid,
To peep at what was in it;
Or tilt the kettle, if you did
But turn your back a minute.
In vain you told her not to touch,
Her trick of meddling grew so much.

Meddlesome Matty

Her grandmamma went out one day,
And by mistake she laid
Her spectacles and snuff-box gay
Too near the little maid;
' Ah ! well,' thought she, ' I'll try them on,
As soon as grandmamma is gone.'

Forthwith she placed upon her nose
The glasses large and wide;
And looking round, as I suppose,
The snuff-box too she spied:
' Oh ! what a pretty box is that;
I'll open it,' said little Matt.

' I know that grandmamma would say,
" Don't meddle with it, dear; "
But then, she's far enough away,
And no one else is near:
Besides, what can there be amiss
In opening such a box as this ? '

So thumb and finger went to work
To move the stubborn lid,
And presently a mighty jerk
The mighty mischief did;
For all at once, ah ! woful case,
The snuff came puffing in her face.

Poems for Infant Minds

Poor eyes, and nose, and mouth, beside,
A dismal sight presented;
In vain, as bitterly she cried,
Her folly she repented.
In vain she ran about for ease;
She could do nothing now but sneeze.

She dashed the spectacles away,
To wipe her tingling eyes,
And as in twenty bits they lay,
Her grandmamma she spies.
'Heydey! and what's the matter now?'
Says grandmamma with lifted brow.

Matilda, smarting with the pain,
And tingling still, and sore,
Made many a promise to refrain
From meddling evermore.
And 'tis a fact, as I have heard,
She ever since has kept her word. A.T.





The Idle Boy

YOUNG Thomas was an idle lad,
Who lounged about all day;
And though he many a lesson had,
He minded nought but play.

He only cared for top and ball,
Or marble, hoop, and kite;
But as for learning, that was all
Neglected by him quite.

In vain his mother's watchful eye,
In vain his master's care;
He followed vice and vanity,
And even learnt to swear.

Poems for Infant Minds

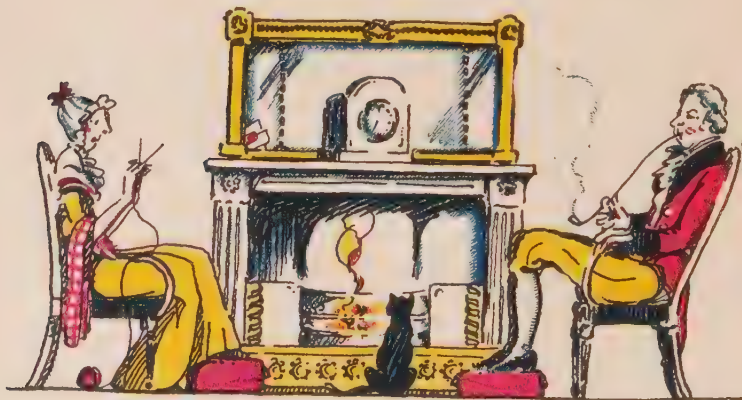
And think you, when he grew a man,
He prospered in his ways?
No: wicked courses never can
Bring good and happy days.

Without a shilling in his purse,
Or cot to call his own,
Poor Thomas grew from bad to worse,
And hardened as a stone.

And oh! it grieves me much to write
His melancholy end;
Then let us leave the mournful sight,
And thoughts of pity send.

But yet may this important truth
Our daily thoughts engage,
That few who spend an idle youth
Will see a happy age.

JANE.





The Little Fisherman

THERE was a little fellow once,
And Harry was his name,
And many a naughty trick had he,
I tell it to his shame.

He minded not his friends' advice,
But followed his own wishes;
And one most cruel trick of his,
Was that of catching fishes.

His father had a little pond,
Where often Harry went;
And there in this unfeeling sport,
He many an evening spent.

One day he took his hook and bait
And hurried to the pond,
And there began the cruel game,
Of which he was so fond.

Poems for Infant Minds

And many a little fish he caught,
And pleased was he to look,
To see them writhe in agony,
And struggle on the hook.

At last, when having caught enough,
And also tired himself,
He hastened home, intending there
To put them on a shelf.

But as he jumped to reach a dish,
To put his fishes in,
A large meat-hook, that hung close by,
Did catch him by the chin.

Poor Harry kicked, and called aloud,
And screamed, and cried, and roared,
While from his wound the crimson blood
In dreadful torrents poured.

The maids came running, frightened much,
To see him hanging there,
And soon they took him from the hook,
And set him in a chair.

The surgeon came and stopped the blood,
And bound his aching head;
And then they carried him up-stairs,
And laid him on his bed.

The Little Fisherman

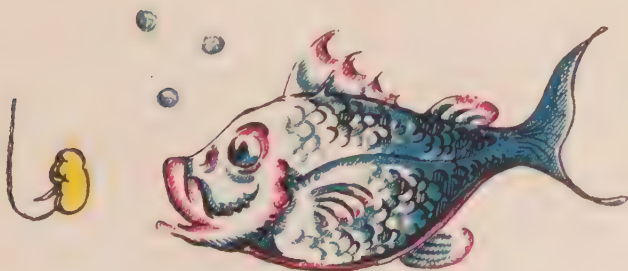
Conviction darted on his mind,
As groaning there he lay,
And with compunction then he thought
About his cruel play.

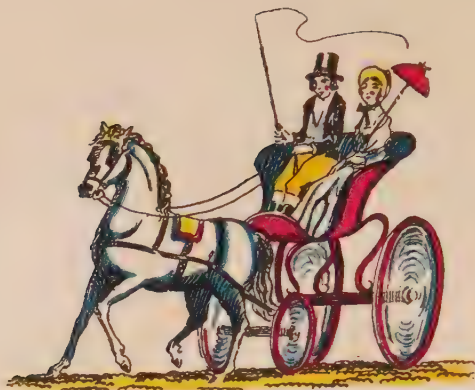
‘ And oh ! ’ said he, ‘ poor little fish,
What tortures they have borne:
While I, well pleased, have stood to see
Their tender bodies torn !

‘ Though fishermen must earn their bread,
And butchers too must slay,
That can be no excuse for me,
Who do the same in play.

‘ And now I feel how great the smart,
How terrible the pain !
I think, while I can feel myself,
I will not fish again.’

JANE.





The Disappointment

IN tears to her mother poor Harriet came,
Let us listen to hear what she says:

‘O see, dear mamma, it is pouring with rain,
We cannot go out in the chaise.

‘All the week I have longed for this holiday so
And fancied the minutes were hours;
And now that I’m dressed and all ready to go,
Do look at those terrible showers!’

‘I’m sorry, my dear,’ her kind mother re-
plied,

‘The rain disappoints us to-day;
But sorrow still more that you fret for a ride,
In such an extravagant way.

‘These slight disappointments are sent to
prepare
For what may hereafter befall;
For seasons of *real* disappointment and care,
Which commonly happen to all.

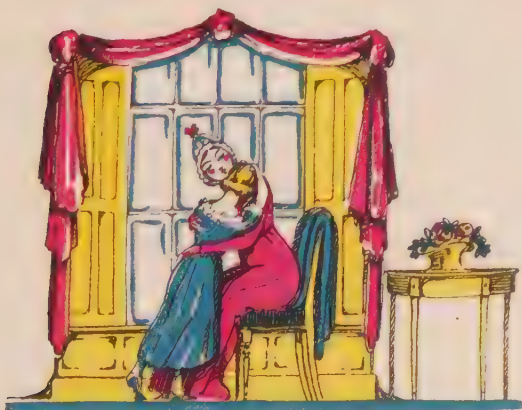
The Disappointment

‘ For just like to-day with its holiday lost,
Is life and its comforts at best:
Our pleasures are blighted, our purposes
crossed,
To teach us it is not our rest.

‘ And when those distresses and crosses appear,
With which you may shortly be tried
You’ll wonder that ever you wasted a tear
On merely the loss of a ride.

‘ But though the world’s pleasures are fleeting
and vain,
Religion is lasting and true;
Real pleasures and peace in her paths you
may gain,
Nor will disappointment ensue.’

JANE.





The Boys and the Apple-tree

AS William and Thomas were walking
one day,
They came by a fine orchard's side:
They would rather eat apples than spell, read,
or play,
And Thomas to William then cried:

‘O brother, look yonder ! what clusters hang
there !

I’ll try and climb over the wall:
I must have an apple; I will have a pear;
Although it should cost me a fall !’

Said William to Thomas, ‘To steal is a sin,
Mamma has oft told this to thee:
I never have stole, nor will I begin,
So the apples may hang on the tree.’

The Boys and the Apple-tree

‘ You are a good boy, as you ever have been,’
Said Thomas, ‘ let’s walk on, my lad:
We’ll call on our schoolfellow, Benjamin
Green
Who to see us, I know, will be glad.’

They came to the house, and asked at the
gate,
‘ Is Benjamin Green now at home ? ’
But Benjamin did not allow them to wait,
And brought them both into the room.

And he smiled, and he laughed, and capered
with joy,
His little companions to greet:
‘ And we too are happy,’ said each little boy,
‘ Our playfellow dear thus to meet.’

‘ Come, walk in our garden, this morning so
fine,
We may, for my father gives leave;
And more, he invites you to stay here and
dine;
And a most happy day we shall have ! ’

But when in the garden, they found ’twas the
same
They saw as they walked in the road;
And near the high wall, when those little
boys came,
They started, as if from a toad:—

Poems for Infant Minds

‘ That large ring of iron, you see on the
ground,
With terrible teeth like a saw,’
Said their friend, ‘ the guard of our garden is
found,
And it keeps all intruders in awe.

‘ If any the warning without set at nought,
Their legs then this man-trap must tear.’
Said William to Thomas, ‘ So you’d have
been caught,
If you had leap’d over just there.’

Cried Thomas, in terror of what now he saw,
‘ With my faults I will heartily grapple;
For I learn what may happen by breaking a
law,
Although but in stealing an apple.’
ADELAIDE.





Idle Richard and the Goat

JOHN BROWN is a man without houses
or lands;
Himself he supports by the work of his
hands:

He brings home his wages each Saturday
night;

To his wife and his children a very good
sight.

His eldest son, Richard, on errands when sent,
To loiter and chatter is very much bent;

And in spite of the care his mother bestows,
He is known by his tatters wherever he goes.

His shoes too are worn, and his feet are half
bare,

And now it is time he should have a new pair;

‘Go at once to the shop,’ said John Brown to
his son,

‘And change me this bank-note—I have
only one.’

Poems for Infant Minds

But now comes the mischief, for Richard
would stop

To prate with a boy at a green-grocer's shop !
And to whom in his boasting he shows his
bank-note:

Just then to the green-stall up marches a goat.
The boys knew full well that it was this goat's
way,

With any that passed her, to gambol and
play:

The three then continued to skip and to frisk,
Till his note on some greens Dick happened
to whisk:

And what was his wonder to see the rude goat,
In munching the greens, eat up his bank-
note !

To his father he ran, in dismay, with the
news,

And by stopping to gossip he lost his new
shoes.

ADELAIDE.





George and the Chimney-sweep

HIS petticoats now George cast off,
For he was four years old;
His trousers were of nankeen stuff,
With buttons bright as gold.
'May I,' said George, 'just go abroad,
My pretty clothes to show?
May I, mamma? but speak the word;'
The answer was, 'No, no.'

'Go, run below, George, in the court,
But go not in the street,
Lest boys with you should make some sport,
Or gipsies you should meet.'
Yet, though forbidden, he went out,
That other boys might spy,
And proudly there he walked about,
And thought—'How fine am I!'

Poems for Infant Minds

But whilst he strutted through the street,
With looks both vain and pert,
A sweep-boy passed, whom not to meet,
He slipped—into the dirt.
The sooty lad, whose heart was kind,
To help him quickly ran,
And grasp'd his arm, with—‘ Never mind,
You're up, my little man.’

Sweep wiped his clothes with labour vain,
And begged him not to cry;
And when he'd blackened every stain,
Said, ‘ Little sir, good-bye.’
Poor George, almost as dark as sweep,
And smeared in dress and face,
Bemoans with sobs, both loud and deep,
His well-deserved disgrace.

ADELAIDE.





The Plum-Cake

‘**O**H ! I’ve got a plum-cake, and a fine
feast I’ll make,
So nice to have all to myself !
I can eat every day while the rest are at play,
And then put it by on the shelf.’

Thus said little John, and how soon it was
gone !

For with zeal to his cake he applied,
While fingers and thumbs, for the sweet-
meats and plums,
Were hunting and digging beside.

Poems for Infant Minds

But, woeful to tell, a misfortune befell,
That shortly his folly revealed,
After eating his fill, he was taken so ill,
That the cause could not now be concealed.

As he grew worse and worse, the doctor and
nurse,
To cure his disorder were sent;
And rightly you'll think, he had physic to
drink,
Which made him sincerely repent.

And while on the bed he rolled his hot head,
Impatient with sickness and pain,
He could not but take this reproof from his
cake,
'Do not be such a glutton again.'

A. T.





Another Plum-Cake

‘OH ! I’ve got a plum-cake, and a feast
make ;
Come, schoolfellows, come at my call :
I assure you ’tis nice, and we’ll each have a
slice,
Here’s more than enough for us all.’

Thus said little Jack, as he gave it a smack,
And sharpened his knife to begin ;
Nor was there one found, upon the play-
ground,
So cross that he would not come in.

Poems for Infant Minds

With masterly strength he cut through it at
length,

And gave to each playmate a share:
Charles, William, and James, and many more
names,
Partook his benevolent care.

And when it was done, and they'd finished
their fun,

To marbles or hoop they went back;
And each little boy felt it always a joy,
To do a good turn for good Jack.

In his task and his book, his best pleasures he
took,

And as he thus wisely began,
Since he's been a man grown, he has con-
stantly shown,

That a good boy will make a good man.

A. T.





The Two Gardens

WHEN Harry and Dick had been
striving to please,
Their father (to whom it was known)
Made two little gardens, and stocked them
with trees,
And gave one to each for his own.

Harry thanked his papa, and with rake, hoe,
and spade,
Directly began his employ:
And soon such a neat little garden was made,
That he panted with labour and joy.

There was always some bed or some border
to mend,
Or something to tie or to stick;
And Harry rose early his garden to tend,
While sleeping lay indolent Dick.

Poems for Infant Minds

The tulip, the rose, and the lily so white,
United their beautiful bloom;
And often the honey-bee stooped from his flight
To sip the delicious perfume.

A neat row of peas in full blossom was seen,
French beans were beginning to shoot;
And his gooseberries and currants, though
yet they were green,
Foretold for him plenty of fruit.

But Richard loved better in bed to repose,
And there, as he curled himself round,
Forgot that no tulip, nor lily, nor rose,
Nor fruit in his garden was found.

Rank weeds and tall nettles disfigured his beds,
Nor cabbage nor lettuce was seen;
The slug and the snail showed their mis-
chievous heads,
And ate every leaf that was green.

Thus Richard the Idle, who shrank from the
cold,

Beheld his trees naked and bare:
While Harry the Active was charmed to behold
The fruit of his patience and care. A. T.





Ball

‘**M**Y good little fellow don’t throw your ball there,

You’ll break neighbour’s windows, I know;
On the end of the house there is room, and
to spare,

Go round, you can have a delightful game
there,

Without fearing for where you may throw.’

Harry thought he might safely continue his
play

With a little more care than before;
So, heedless of all that his father could say,
As soon as he saw he was out of the way
Resolved to have fifty throws more.

Poems for Infant Minds

Already as far as to forty he rose,
And no mischief had happened at all;
One more, and one more, he successfully
throws,
But when, as he thought, just arrived at the
close,
In popped his unfortunate ball.
'T'm sure that I thought, and I did not intend,'
Poor Harry was going to say;
But soon came the glazier the window to mend,
And both the bright shillings he wanted to spend
He had for his folly to pay.
When little folks think they know better than
great,
And what is forbidden them, do,
We must always expect to see, sooner or late,
That such wise little fools have a similar fate,
And that one of the fifty goes through.

A. T.





James and the Shoulder of Mutton

YOUNG Jem at noon return'd from
school,

As hungry as could be,
He cried to Sue, the servant-maid,
' My dinner give to me.'

Said Sue, ' It is not yet come home;
Besides, it is not late.'

' No matter that,' cries little Jem,
' I do not like to wait.'

Quick to the baker's Jemmy went,
And ask'd, ' Is dinner done ? '

' It is,' replied the baker's man.
' Then home I'll with it run.'

Poems for Infant Minds

‘Nay, Sir,’ replied he prudently,
‘I tell you ’tis too hot,
And much too heavy ’tis for you.’
‘I tell you it is not.

‘Papa, mamma, are both gone out,
And I for dinner long;
So give it me, it is all mine,
And, baker, hold your tongue.

‘A shoulder ’tis of mutton nice !
And batter-pudding too;
I’m glad of that, it is so good;
How clever is our Sue !’

Now near the door young Jem was come,
He round the corner turned,
But oh, sad fate ! unlucky chance !
The dish his fingers burned.

Low in the kennel down fell dish,
And down fell all the meat:
Swift went the pudding in the stream,
And sailed along the street.

James and the Shoulder of Mutton

The people laughed, and rude boys grinned
At mutton's hapless fall;
But though ashamed, young Jemmy cried,
'Better lose part than all.'

The shoulder by the knuckle seized,
His hands both grasped it fast,
And deaf to all their gibes and cries,
He gain'd his home at last.

'Impatience is a fault,' cries Jem,
'The baker told me true;
In future I will patient be,
And mind what says our Sue.'

ADELAIDE.





False Alarms

ONE day little Mary most loudly did call,
‘Mamma ! O mamma, pray come here,
A fall I have had, oh ! a very sad fall.’

Mamma ran in haste and in fear.
Then Mary jumped up, and she laughed in
great glee,

And cried, ‘Why, how fast you can run !
No harm has befall’n, I assure you, to me,
My screaming was only in fun.’

Her mother was busy at work the next day,
She heard from without a loud cry:
‘The great Dog has got me ! O help me !
O pray !

He tears me, he bites me, I die !’
Mamma, all in terror, quick to the court flew,
And there little Mary she found ;
Who, laughing, said, ‘Madam, pray how do
you do ?’

And curtsayed quite down to the ground.

False Alarms

That night little Mary was some time in bed,
When cries and loud shrieking were heard:
'I'm on fire, O mamma! O come up, or
I'm dead!'

Mamma she believed not a word.
'Sleep, sleep, naughty child,' she called out
from below,
'How often have I been deceived!
You are telling a story, you very well know:
Go to sleep, for you can't be believed.'

Yet still the child screamed: now the house
filled with smoke:

That fire is above, Jane declares:
Alas! Mary's words they soon found were
no joke,

When ev'ry one hastened up-stairs.
All burnt and all seamed is her once pretty face,
And terribly marked are her arms,
Her features all scarred, leave a lasting disgrace,
For giving mamma false alarms. ADELAIDE.





The Gleaner

BEFORE the bright sun rises over the hill,
In the corn-field poor Mary is seen,
Impatient her little blue apron to fill,
With the few scattered ears she can glean.

She never leaves off, nor runs out of her place,
To play, or to idle and chat;
Except now and then, just to wipe her hot
face,
And to fan herself with her broad hat.

The Gleaner

‘ Poor girl, hard at work in the heat of the sun
How tired and hot you must be;
Why don’t you leave off as the others have
done,
And sit with them under the tree ? ’

‘ Oh no, for my mother lies ill in her bed,
Too feeble to spin or to knit;
And my poor little brothers are crying for
bread
And we hardly can give them a bit.

‘ Then could I be merry, or idle, and play,
While they are so hungry and ill ?
Oh no, I would rather work hard all the day
My little blue apron to fill.’

JANE.





The Pigs

‘DO look at those pigs as they lie in the straw,’

Willy said to his father one day;

‘They keep eating longer than ever I saw,
Oh, what greedy gluttons are they!’

‘I see they are feasting,’ his father replied,

‘They eat a great deal, I allow;
But let us remember, before we deride,
’Tis the nature, my dear, of a sow.

The Pigs

‘ But were a great boy, such as you, my dear
Will,
Like them to be eating all day,
Or be taking nice things till he made himself
ill,
What a glutton, indeed, we might say !

‘ If plum-cake and sugar he constantly picks,
And sweetmeats, and comfits, and figs,
We should tell him to leave off his own greedy
tricks,
Before he finds fault with the pigs.’

JANE.





Finery

IN an elegant frock trimmed with beautiful
lace,

And hair nicely curled hanging over her face,
Young Fanny went out to the house of a
friend,

With a large *little* party the evening to spend.

‘ Ah ! how they will all be delighted, I guess,
And stare with surprise at my handsome new
dress ! ’

Thus said the vain girl, and her little heart
beat,

Impatient the happy young party to meet.

But, alas ! they were all too intent on their play,
To observe the fine clothes of this lady so gay ;
And thus all her trouble quite lost its design ;
For they saw she was proud, but forgot she
was fine.

Finery

'Twas Lucy, though only in simple white clad
(Nor trimmings, nor laces, nor jewels she
had),
Whose cheerful good-nature delighted them
more
Than Fanny and all the fine garments she
wore.

'Tis better to have a sweet smile on one's face,
Than to wear a fine frock with an elegant
lace;
For the good-natured girl is loved best in the
main,
If her dress is but decent, though ever so
plain.

JANE.





The Vulgar Little Lady

‘**B**UT, mamma, now,’ said Charlotte,
‘pray don’t you believe
That I’m better than Jenny, my nurse?
Only see my red shoes, and the lace on my
sleeve;
Her clothes are a thousand times worse.’

‘I ride in my coach, and have nothing to do,
And the country folks stare at me so;
And nobody dares to control me but you,
Because I’m a lady, you know.’

The Vulgar Little Lady

‘ Then, servants are vulgar and I am genteel;
So, really, ’tis out of the way,
To think that I should not be better a deal
Than maids, and such people as they.’

‘ Gentility, Charlotte,’ her mother replied,
‘ Belongs to no station or place;
And nothing’s so vulgar as folly and pride,
Though dressed in red slippers and lace.

‘ Not all the fine things that fine ladies possess
Should teach them the poor to despise;
For ’tis in good manners, and not in good
dress,
That the truest gentility lies.’

A. T.





The Pin

‘**D**EAR me ! what signifies a pin !
I’ll leave it on the floor ;
My pincushion has others in,
Mamma has plenty more :
A miser will I never be,
Said little heedless Emily.

So tripping on to giddy play,
She left the pin behind,
For Betty’s broom to whisk away,
Or some one else to find ;
She never gave a thought, indeed,
To what she might to-morrow need.

Next day a party was to ride,
To see an air-balloon !
And all the company beside
Were dressed and ready soon :
But she, poor girl, she could not stir,
For just a pin to finish her.

The Pin

'Twas vainly now, with eye and hand,
She did to search begin;
There was not one—not one, the band
Of her pelisse to pin !
She cut her pincushion in two,
But not a pin had slidden through !

At last, as hunting on the floor,
Over a crack she lay,
The carriage rattled to the door,
Then rattled fast away.
Poor Emily ! she was not in,
For want of just—a single pin !

There's hardly anything so small,
So trifling or so mean,
That we may never want at all,
For service unforeseen:
And those who venture wilful waste,
May woful want expect to taste. A. T.





The Pond

THERE was a round pond, and a pretty
pond too,
About it white daisies and violets grew,
And dark weeping willows, that stoop to the
ground,
Dipped in their long branches, and shaded it
round.

A party of ducks to this pond would repair,
To sport 'mid the green water-weeds that
grew there:

Indeed the assembly would frequently meet,
To discuss their affairs, in this pleasant retreat.

Now, the subjects on which they were wont
to converse,

I am sorry I cannot exactly rehearse;
For though I've oft listened in hopes of dis-
cerning,

I own 'tis a matter that baffles my learning.

The Pond

One day a young chicken that lived there-
about,
Stood watching to see the ducks pop in and
out,
Now turning tail upward, now diving below;
She thought, of all things, she should like to
do so.

So the poor silly chick was determined to try;
She thought 'twas as easy to swim as to fly:
Though her mother had told her she must not
go near,
She foolishly thought there was nothing to
fear.

' My feet, wings, and feathers, for aught I
can see,
As good as the duck's are for swimming,'
said she:
' Though *my* beak is pointed, and *their* beaks
are round,
Is that any reason that I should be drowned ?

' Why should I not swim then, as well as a
duck ?
I think I shall venture, and e'en try my luck !
For,' said she ('spite of all that her mother had
taught her),
' I'm really remarkably fond of the water.'

Poems for Infant Minds

So in this poor ignorant animal flew,
But soon found her dear mother's cautions
were true:

She splashed, and she dashed, and she turned
herself round,

And heartily wished herself safe on the ground.

But now 'twas too late to begin to repent,
The harder she struggled the deeper she went ;
And when every effort she vainly had tried,
She slowly sank down to the bottom and
died !

The ducks, I perceived, began loudly to
quack,

When they saw the poor fowl floating dead
on its back ;

And by their grave gestures and looks in
discoursing,

Obedience to parents were plainly enforcing.

JANE.





Greedy Richard

‘**I** THINK I want some pies this morning,’
Said Dick, stretching himself and
yawning;
So down he threw his slate and books,
And sauntered to the pastry-cook’s.

And there he cast his greedy eyes
Round on the jellies and the pies,
So to select, with anxious care,
The very nicest that was there.

At last the point was thus decided:
As his opinion was divided
’Twixt pie and jelly, being loth
Either to leave, he took them both.

Poems for Infant Minds

Now Richard never could be pleased
To stop when hunger was appeased,
But would go on to eat still more
When he had had an ample store.

‘ No, not another now,’ said Dick;
‘ Dear me, I feel extremely sick:
I cannot even eat this bit;
I wish I had not tasted it.’

Then slowly rising from his seat,
He threw his cheesecake in the street,
And left the tempting pastry-cook’s
With very discontented looks.

Just then a man with wooden leg
Met Dick, and held his hat to beg;
And while he told his mournful case,
Looked at him with imploring face.

Dick, wishing to relieve his pain,
His pockets searched, but searched in vain;
And so at last he did declare,
He had not left a farthing there.

Greedy Richard

The beggar turned with face of grief,
And look of patient unbelief,
While Richard now his folly blamed,
And felt both sorry and ashamed.

‘ I wish,’ said he (but wishing’s vain),
‘ I had my money back again,
And had not spent my last, to pay
For what I only threw away.

‘ Another time I’ll take advice
And not buy things because they’re nice;
But rather save my little store,
To give to those who want it more.’

JANE.





Dirty Jim

THERE was one little Jim,
'Tis reported of him,
And must be to his lasting disgrace,
That he never was seen
With hands at all clean,
Nor yet ever clean was his face.

His friends were much hurt
To see so much dirt,
And often they made him quite clean;
But all was in vain,
He got dirty again,
And not at all fit to be seen.

Dirty Jim

It gave him no pain
To hear them complain,
Nor his own dirty clothes to survey:
His indolent mind
No pleasure could find
In tidy and wholesome array.

The idle and bad,
Like this little lad,
May love dirty ways, to be sure;
But good boys are seen
To be decent and clean,
Although they are ever so poor.

JANE.





Mischief

LET those who're fond of idle tricks,
Of throwing stones, and hurling bricks
And all that sort of fun,
Now hear a tale of idle Jim,
That warning they may take by him,
Nor do as he has done.

In harmless sport or healthful play
He did not pass his time away,
Nor took his pleasure in it;
For mischief was his only joy:
No book, or work, nor even toy,
Could please him for a minute.

A neighbour's house he'd slyly pass,
And throw a stone to break the glass,
And then enjoy the joke !
Or, if a window open stood,
He'd throw in stones, or bits of wood,
To frighten all the folk.

Mischief

If travellers passing chanced to stay,
Of idle Jim to ask the way,
 He never told them right;
And then, quite hardened in his sin,
Rejoiced to see them taken in,
 And laughed with all his might.
He'd tie a string across the street,
Just to entangle people's feet,
 And make them tumble down:
Indeed, he was disliked so much,
That no good boy would play with such
 A nuisance to the town.

At last the neighbours in despair,
This mischief would no longer bear:
 And so—to end the tale,
This lad, to cure him of his ways,
Was sent to spend some dismal days
 Within the county jail. JANE.





A New Year's Gift

A CHARMING present comes from
town,
A baby-house so neat;
With kitchen, parlour, dining-room,
And chambers all complete.

A gift to Emma and to Rose,
From grandpapa it came;
The little Rosa smiled delight,
And Emma did the same.

They eagerly examined all:
The furniture was gay;
And in the rooms they placed their dolls,
When dressed in fine array.

A New Year's Gift

At night, their little family
Must tenderly be fed;
And then, when dollies were undressed,
They all were put to bed.

Thus Rose and Emma passed each hour,
Devoted to their play;
And long were cheerful, happy, kind—
Nor cross disputes had they,

Till Rose in baby-house would change
The chairs which were below:
' This carpet they would better suit;
I think I'll have it so.'

No, no, indeed,' her sister said,
' I'm older, Rose, than you;
And I'm the mistress, you the maid,
And what I bid must do.'

The quarrel grew to such a height,
Mamma she heard the noise,
And coming in, beheld the floor
All strewn with broken toys.

' Oh, fie, my Emma ! fie, my Rose !
Say, what is this about ?
Remember, this is New-year's day,
And both are going out.'

Poems for Infant Minds

Now Betty calls the little girls
To come up-stairs and dress;
They still dispute, with muttered taunts,
And anger they express.

But just prepared to leave their room,
Persisting yet in strife,
Rose sickening fell on Betty's lap,
As if devoid of life.

Mamma appeared at Betty's call—
John for the doctor goes;
And some disease of dangerous kind,
Its symptoms soon disclose.

' But though I stay, my Emma, you
May go and spend the day.'
' Oh no, mamma,' replied the child,
' I must with Rosa stay.

' Beside my sister's bed I'll sit,
And watch her with such care:
No pleasure can I e'er enjoy,
Till she my pleasure share.

A New Year's Gift

'How silly now seems our dispute;—
Not one of us she knows !
How pale she looks, how hard she breathes !
Alas ! my pretty Rose !'

ADELAIDE.



THE

END





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